

the fruit, vary from 0.6 to 1.5 mm. long and average 1.06 mm. Measurements were made only on the fruit, since they are rarely completely visible in flowers without boiling and dissecting. The styles of T. virginicum vary from 1.9 mm. (two instances) to 3.5 mm. and average 2.72 mm.

When the dimensions of the sepals and styles are plotted together [see the chart on page 290], they show that the aggregate is composed of two completely separate populations.

The distribution of the aggregate is in some ways similar to that of Sarracenia purpurea, which consists of a southern population chiefly confined to the coastal plain and a northern one extending far inland. T. virginicum (L.) Raf. is essentially a plant of the coastal plain from Nova Scotia to the Gulf coast, but extends inland across New York into southern Ontario and reappears in northern Indiana. T. Fraseri (Spach) Gl. is essentially a boreal plant, extending from Newfoundland and Labrador to Manitoba and southward to Connecticut, New York, northern Indiana, and Nebraska, or at higher altitudes to West Virginia.

A LETTER FROM FERDINAND VON MUELLER

H. A. Gleason

There recently came into my possession a hand-written letter from the noted Australian botanist, Sir Ferdinand Jakob Heinrich von Mueller, addressed to B. Daydon Jackson (1), which has some biographical and bibliographical interest. Von Mueller was born in Germany in 1825, emigrated at an early age to Australia, became a British subject, devoted his life to a study of the flora of Australia, was government botanist for forty-four years and director of the Melbourne Botanic Garden for sixteen years, was created Baron by the King of Württemberg in 1871, was knighted by Queen Victoria, and died in 1896. His career therefore shows some parallelism with those of Sir Richard and Sir Robert Schomburgk, who were also born in Germany. The letter reads:

21.11.83.

Herewith, dear Mr. Jackson, I beg to send you a copy of part of a letter from Dr. Fournier (2), just received, concerning the priority of Vahea over Landolphia, as this question will interest you not only for these genera but in many other respects for your nomenclator (3). I also forward a copy of the important prospectus, found by Dr. Fournier, as

this renders it conclusive, how far the "illustration des genres" had actually appeared up to 1796. As you and Mr. Britten (4) took such an interest in clearing up the dates (5) of Rees' Cyclopaedia (6), you likely will give some attention to this question now.

I intended to have written a letter on the subject in Trimen's (7) journal or rather now Britten's journal of Botany (8), but I have been suffering for fully two months from so severe a bronchial catarrh, that I had to keep to my rooms all that time; the cough has slightly abated now, but as there is some emphysema, it is doubtful whether I will recover. My parents both died early on phthisis, and hereditary inclination to that fatal disease brought me out to this warmer clime so soon as I left the University. In the wet season it is however even here too cold for me. I am just going up into a mild forest region with the hope of benefitting from the moist equable air there. I feel very weak. Am very sorry to hear of Mr. Bentham's failing strength, but hope, that after some rest he will still be able to resume his grand phytographic labours.

Respectfully your

Ferd. von Mueller.

Only a part of Fournier's letter was copied and sent to Jackson. It reads:

Paris, le 24 Septembre 1883.

Très honoré Monsieur-

Je réponds d'abord à la partie de votre lettre qui concerne l'époque de publication de la partie botanique de l'Encyclopédie (10). J'ai correspondu déjà sur ce sujet pour vous avec M. de Candolle (11), qui a du vous transmettre ma réponse. De plus, en rendant compte dans le Bulletin de la Société de France t. XXIX, Revue, C p. 137 (1882), de votre Literary Reference to the Caoutchouc Vaheas, j'ai transcrit le texte de Millin, qui prouve que la genre Vahea a été publié antérieurement à 1797.

Aujourd'hui je me trouve en possession de nouveaux renseignements, grâce à un prospectus publié le 21 Nov. 1796 par l'éditeur de l'Encyclopédie, prospectus qu'un heureux hasard à fait entrer dans ma bibliothèque. Je vous en adresse ci-joint un extrait.

Publication

de la soixantième livraison de l'Encyclopédie
à Paris, rue des Poitevins No. 18.

Le 1-er Frimaire, an cinquième de la République française
(le lundi 21 Novembre 1796, vieux style)

Cette livraison est composée

1^o de la dix septième des planches d'histoire naturelle, formant la septième centurie de celles de la botanique, par le citoyen Lamarck (12), de l'Institut national, professeur

et administrateur du Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle.

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Le volume de planches, qui fait partie de cette livraison, est le septième centurie de celles de la botanique, et présente la continuation de l'ouvrage intitulé: Illustration des genres. Ces planches sont gravées avec le plus grand soin, et la plupart des figures sont originales.

Elles offrent, depuis la planche 601 jusqu'à la 700^e inclusivement, 164 genres, parmi lesquels il s'en trouve quantité de nouveaux. . . . Les genres exposés dans cette livraison appartiennent à la Diadelphie entière, à la Polyadelphie et à la plus grande partie de la Syngénésie. . . . Dans la soixante-unième livraison nous publierons le première partie du tome IV^e du Dictionnaire de botanique, par le citoyen Lamarck.

The letter, with its accompanying correspondence, therefore becomes of bibliographic value, indicating definitely that the publication of plates 601--700 of the Illustration des Genres actually appeared in 1796. The accepted date of publication has heretofore been 1797.

One can only guess the history of the letter since 1883, or the early part of 1884, when it reached Mr. Jackson. Probably it was mislaid among some herbarium specimens, sent to America with duplicates, lay unobserved for more than forty years, and finally came to light among some old papers at the Biological Station of the University of Michigan.

Footnotes

- (1) B. Daydon Jackson (1846--1927), editor of the *Index Kewensis*.
- (2) Eugène Pierre Nicolas Fournier (1834--1884).
- (3) *Index Kewensis*, 1893--1895, with supplements 1--8, 1901--1934.
- (4) James Britten (1846--1924), editor of *Journal of Botany* 1880--1924.
- (5) *Jour. Bot.* 15: 107, 108. 1877; 18: 87, 88. 1880.
- (6) Abraham Rees, *The cyclopaedia; or universal dictionary of arts, sciences, and literature*. London, 1806--1820.
- (7) Henry Trimen (1843--1896), editor of *Journal of Botany* 1871--1879.

- (8) Journal of Botany, founded 1863, now in its eightieth volume.
- (9) George Bentham (1800--1884).
- (10) Encyclopédie méthodique. Botanique par M. le Chevalier de Lamarck. Paris, 1783--1817.
- (11) Alphonse Louis Pierre Pyramus de Candolle (1806--1893).
- (12) Jean Baptiste Antoine Pierre Monnet de Lamarck (1744--1829).
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NEW OR NOTEWORTHY MELASTOMES, CHIEFLY ECUADOREAN

H. A. Gleason

There is in South America a group of seven species within the genus Meriania which have a conspicuous habitual similarity. This is due, on superficial examination, to their broad 5-nerved leaves, usually elliptical in shape, their inflorescence with well developed central axis, and the densely pubescent, cinereous or ferruginous hypanthium. Closer examination reveals other features of similarity of a more technical nature. The hairs of the hypanthium are wholly or partly enlarged at base and there roughened or stellate, while the terminal portion is slender, smooth, and curved-ascending. The hairs of the lower leaf-surface are conspicuously or minutely stellate at base, with an erect simple bristle.

In the four species which inhabit Venezuela and Colombia we find also a strong similarity in the stamens (Fig. 1). The anthers are flattened tangentially; the thecae are scarcely in contact, so that the connective is visible from the anterior side. On the posterior side the connective is not elevated; it is prolonged straight back. The Peruvian species has a connective which appears quite different, but which can be readily homologized with the more northern species. In the Bolivian species we find a real divergence. Here the connective is prolonged into a large basal spur and a smaller dorsal spur. This plant, M. boliviensis Cogn., was originally assigned by its author to the section Eumeriania, characterized by unappendaged anthers and solitary flowers. Later, in his monograph of the family, he placed it in section Umbellatae, with paniculate flowers but with unappendaged anthers. Apparently Cogniaux never made a dissection